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Gravia Manent

LETTERS

ON THE

COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS

BY

GRAVIOIRA MANENT.

*Presented by
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NEW-YORK:

PRINTED BY ALEX. S. GOULD, 144 NASSAU-STREET.

1841.

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1841

LETTERS

BY

GRAVIOIRA MANENT

ON THE

COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS.*

Public attention has been long directed to this institution in the hope that it would take some rank among the medical colleges in the country, in some degree proportionate to the patronage which it has received : but it seems that all reasonable expectation is doomed to be disappointed. Its history, although most instructive, has as yet taught its government nothing ; it drags on a miserable, sickly existence, without the confidence of the public, or the support of the medical profession ; and while every other literary and scientific institution in the State is progressively improving in knowledge, usefulness, and respectability, this stands in the same, or a worse condition, than when it was re-organized fifteen years ago. With a liberal charter derived from liberal and intelligent men, (the Regents of the University,) it has been degraded by management into a *de facto* close corporation, and much worse than such, because the appearance of an election of trustees is preserved by the Regents, while their confidence is abused, and they are made the registrars of the will of the President, who, upon

* The following letters appeared in the month of February last, in the columns of a daily newspaper, which has but a limited circulation among that class of persons which they principally interest ; the writer, therefore, has thought it expedient to republish them in this form, that they may be more conveniently addressed to those whom they concern. The statements which they contain are facts, and the opinions obvious inferences, and they are given to the public in the hope that they will attract sufficient attention from the Regents of the University, to induce them to apply a corrective.

all occasions of vacancies, recommends *privately* the successors. So long has this game been played, that the board of trustees is completely controlled by its president, and however difficult it may be to convene a quorum, on ordinary business, it is far otherwise when his interest requires that a quorum should be formed—then the requisite number is not only present, but there is no occasion for any deliberation of any kind : his friends are all sufficiently informed to vote as he wishes, and having voted, the board is immediately adjourned till it shall please the president to convene them again. This farce has been so often acted, that the medical public are disgusted, and have withdrawn all confidence from the school. The government of the institution, however, is not its only vice ; bad as this is, it would still be tolerable if it could be redeemed by the genius, the intelligence, the liberality, or the integrity of its president ; but in all these qualities, if he be not deficient, he certainly does not abound : there is nothing to spare : he holds two important situations without possessing the qualifications required for either. As Professor of Physiology, his course of instruction is worthless.* The title of the course gives him an apology for lecturing on any and every thing which he may think co-relevant, and as this desultory mode of talking may be continued *ad infinitum*, without study, the great doctrines of the laws of healthy functions are altogether forgotten ; and such is the measure of his liberality of expenditure in illustrating his course of lectures, that the price of a rat or rabbit, dog or kitten, has never, to my knowledge, been expended since he has held this distinguished station ! The number of matriculated students is

* *Worthless*—The writer does not use this term in the spirit of mere vituperation ; there is no word so well suited to convey the truth ; for although something may be taught which has a positive value as information, there is so much more, which is so false in fact, and erroneous in reasoning, as to leave no doubt on the mind of an intelligent hearer, that the wheat as compared with the chaff bears scarcely any assignable proportion. With the exception of three or four lectures on abstract and abstruse subjects, of little importance whether understood or not ; the whole course is a meagre syllabus of exploded doctrines, which have been so long known as to have been forgotten. The four important subjects of Respiration, Circulation, Digestion, and Secretion, are disposed of as if they were of infinitely less account than the anecdotes to which they give occasion ; and the time occupied in the serious discussion of physiological truths is as nothing compared with that which is spent in relating pleasant stories. How much truth, for example, would be required to neutralize facts like these ? “ That whales are fat, because they live in cold latitudes ”—“ that nature’s laws of compensation, in the absence of fat provide abundance of hair, and that, therefore, the Russians starve their hogs that they may bear good crops of bristles ”—“ that certain animals possess the love of sentiment as well as the instinct of the sexes ”—that in some, the hog for example, the male has its seasons, but the female has not”—all which interesting truths, aside from their importance, are as well settled as that the most meagre sheep always has the best fleece !!

about *one hundred*, of whom about twenty-five attend his lectures, because they cannot be permitted to graduate unless they take out the tickets for two courses, whether they attend them or not : and when it is considered that this is the most interesting branch of study taught in a medical school, the simple fact that not more than one quarter part of the pupils avail themselves of the lectures delivered by the president, is a mortifying evidence of the estimate which the students have formed, both of them and him.

As the Legislature are now in session, and the Regents of the University are required by law to meet from time to time during the session for the purpose of supervising the concerns of all the literary and scientific institutions in the state, it is to be devoutly wished that they will take early notice of this school, in order that if changes are necessary, they may come up for deliberation before the adjournment. It would be strange indeed, if every body should be impressed with the necessity of reform in this institution, except the Regents, whose exclusive duty it is to carry out all reform ! and I would respectfully suggest that they appoint a committee to visit the institution as soon as the navigation opens, that there may be time for their report, and the action it may suggest, before their adjournment. Any attempt to procure information in any other manner than by a committee of their own body, will turn out to be idle waste of time, and will result in nothing, as the experience of the last winter has abundantly proved.

GRAVIOIRA MANENT.

No. 2.

In my former communication I said that it was devoutly to be wished "That the Regents of the University would send a committee to visit the institution, and report in time for such action as the report of that committee shall suggest." I now propose to give the reason for this method of proceeding, in the belief that no other means of arriving at the truth will serve any valuable purpose. The institution is so held in thrall by its president, Dr. Smith, that no order or resolution of their board will reach the board of trustees, or the board of professors, till too late to be of use. On a late occasion the Hon Regents sent to enquire whether or not the interests of the college would not be promoted by a consolidation of some of the courses of instruction ; the communication came to the Registrar, (Dr. Deering,) and of course was transmitted to the president, who in place of calling a meeting of the trustees immediately, and consulting the professors previous to the

call, waited till *he was ready*, (about three weeks afterward,) and when the trustees convened, he volunteered a report on this subject, mixed up with other matters, which they (the trustees,) laid upon the table, by a decided vote; it was fair to presume, therefore, that it required further consideration before any final action, but the paper which he presented was never afterward found, the simple truth of the matter being that he had thrown it into the fire as soon as they refused, unconditionally, to accept it! He was soon relieved, however, from all anxiety on the subject, as he had a friend at hand who offered a resolution, believed to be in his own hand writing, viz: that *any consolidation of the courses of instruction was inexpedient*. Now we ask the medical public to look at this matter. It is not only surmised, but known and believed, that the course of Physiology is and has been so conducted that it is for the interest of the college that it should be merged in some other professorship, where it would be better taught, and with less charge to the pupil: and by none was this better understood than by the gentleman who offered the resolution; yet by a little management he is made to stand god-father to a resolution which his own good sense and his conscience condemn. But further, the resolution as passed by the Regents had for its object the benefit of the school—it came from a highly respectable source, a source from which the college derives all its power and privileges, and from which the president himself, by a strange accident, derived his office.* Was it not reasonable that it should have been referred? Was it not reasonable that the professors of the other branches of instruction should

* That Dr. Smith's connection with the college was accidental, is shown by the following fact:—In 1826, the executive committee of physicians and surgeons, who had been instrumental in producing the college reform, directed one of their number to invite him to become a candidate for the chair of anatomy and physiology; upon the receipt of the letter he immediately consented, and by return of mail his answer was received. In a few days, afterward, however, several of the committee found that they had committed a great mistake, since he was believed to be but an indifferent substitute for the distinguished professor of those branches (Dr. Post,) who had just resigned: and, moreover, was believed to be a materialist. Under these circumstances it was suggested that his nomination ought to be opposed, and measures adopted to induce Dr. Post to return, who would bring with him an able dissector in the person of Dr. Frederick King; this last measure would have succeeded, and Dr. Smith would have been left, to use his own language, in the swamps of Virginia, but for the active and zealous opposition of Dr. Manley, who held it to be disgraceful to invite a gentleman to accept a situation, and having secured his affirmative answer, turn round and interpose every obstacle to his appointment. It was a great error, notwithstanding the honesty of the argument, for if ever there had occurred a case in which the consideration of consequences should have settled the question of duty, this was one, and every physician in New-York, qualified to form a judgment, is now sensible of it.

have been consulted? Was it not reasonable that it should have been the subject of deliberation, and that the result to which the trustees arrived should have been presented to the Hon. Regents, with the reasons therefor? To these several enquiries common sense and common courtesy answer *yes*, but it did not suit,—the question need not be deliberated: it must not be discussed: it shall not be debated: *sic volo* said the President; and this serious resolution of the Regents, one of which had for its object the vital interests of the school, is disposed of without even the formality of a reference, through fear that a reference would elicit unwelcome truth. Dr. Smith is too well versed in the management of colleges to permit discussion on subjects which can be disposed of without it: and a reference of any subject to a committee, with one only exception, (questions of finance,) is so strange in that board, that the members of it would be surprised if it was suggested. No man is presumed to know or care what is done, or may be required, except himself; he never brings up a measure till it has been matured *outside*; and those who usually vote with him are as ignorant of the consequences of their own acts, as if they believed that they were wholly irresponsible.

I am sorry that duty obliges me to speak thus plainly, but believing as I do that the removal of Dr. Smith from the station he occupies is a *sine qua non* condition of the restoration of public confidence and professional support to the school which he assumes to govern, I can do no less. In seaman's phrase, he owns a timber head in the ship, by virtue of a bond of Bottomry, in the shape of a loan of \$5000, and he claims and has heretofore managed to control the interests and the reputation of every man who has, or may have a venture on board.

GRAVIOIRA MANENT.

No. 3.

'Tis in the very nature of corporations to degenerate; the Legislature who creates them always intends to consult the public interest, and those who control them as invariably consult their own. Literary institutions having corporate powers form no exceptions to this rule. A striking illustration of this truth is furnished by the history of the college of physicians and surgeons in this city. Under its former administration so rapid was its declension from the great platform of principle on which it was founded, that it became a private school, owned and governed by the professors, who monopolized all the private as well as the public teaching in this city. The appointments to the

chairs were considered to be capital furnished by the public, from which each man derived a revenue proportioned to his influence among his fellows. So glaring and obtrusive did these abuses become, that the medical profession with unparalled unanimity agreed to bring the college to a severe account. They did so. The controversy lasted six years, and at last, in order to intimidate the Regents, the professors, who it appears had formed with each other an *alliance offensive and defensive*, hit on the notable expedient of resigning their commissions in a body, in the belief that the school without them could not exist, or at the least, that the Regents could be induced to think so, in which event they would not accept their resignations, and might be disposed to dismiss the complaints and the controversy to which they had given occasion. But in this they were disappointed! Their resignations were all accepted; and thus, what was only intended to operate a wholesome *reform* resulted in a complete *revolution* of the college. Not one of them was invited back, and it became necessary to fill all the chairs. In this emergency attention was by chance directed to John Augustine Smith, then the president of William and Mary College, who had some reputation, and when a young man had lectured in the same school as adjunct to Dr. Post. He was accordingly invited to accept the nomination to the chair of Anatomy, to which he readily assented, because, among other reasons, he had a controversy then on hand in his own college, which, judging from the temper of the disputants as manifested in the Virginia House of Delegates did not auger the most agreeable results for him. He was appointed without serious opposition, and he received a credit in advance for talents as a scholar, and qualities as a teacher, which remains open to this hour: anticipation has not been realized. The Chair was not as ably filled as had been expected, and as his friends desired; and it was thought that the interests of the college required that he should give place to one better qualified; he was accordingly *transferred*, and Dr. Rhinelanders was appointed in his stead. The place he now holds, as Professor, is perhaps better calculated than any other to display all the varied stores of a well furnished mind; in place of which, the exhibition is like that of a pawnbroker's shop, where every thing presented is out of fashion, old or useless, but all worn before. The stories, which make up three-fourths of the lectures, would be amusing if they had not been so often repeated; they fall upon the ear of the student in his second term as stale anecdotes, and if he has ever in his boyhood read Goldsmith's inimitable novel of the Vicar of Wakefield, his memory will not fail to call up the character of Jenkinson, whom the good Mr. Primrose prevented from inflicting upon his audience a new edition of his cosmogony. When Dr. Smith was

transposed, or deposed from the chair which for years he had occupied, it was no doubt done for the best, and he acquiesced, from necessity, as is shown by the fact, that when it became vacant by resignation a few years afterward, he did not attempt to reclaim it, knowing that any effort of the kind, after the experience of his former failure, would prove abortive. The presidency, in connection with physiology, seemed to fill up the measure of his aspiration, and he no doubt concluded to console himself with the possession of a power, which, if he could not command, would enable him to enforce respect. He holds the doctrine that a president ought of right to control the institution over which he presides; and although this cherished dogma was signally rebuked by the Virginians, when he was in William and Mary, he still persists to maintain it, and to a certain extent he has succeeded.

Whether peaceful possession of all the powers of the college in the shape of an *Autocracy*, can be secured to him or not, the Hon. Regents will determine.

In my next I propose to look into William and Mary, when I may be able to show the causes of its declension under an autocratic administration.

GRAVIOIRA MANENT.

No. 4.

In my last I promised to look into William and Mary College, and I proceed to give a small portion of its history, which is calculated to teach an important lesson to those who are by law made the guardians of our literary institutions. It is impossible that the facts disclosed (*to them* for the first time,) can be viewed with indifference, since the circumstances in which the College of Physicians and Surgeons is now placed correspond so nearly with those which almost ruined it, I know it is industriously circulated that the cause of Dr. Smith is the cause of the college: and if this be true it can be considered only as a misfortune which must be repaired speedily, if repaired at all; but it is far otherwise. Those best acquainted with the interests of medical education know, and if asked they will say, that the college would be as much relieved by his retreat from it in both the capacities in which he is now attached, as was that of William and Mary when he found it convenient to resign his office of President.

We gathered from the petitions, remonstrances, and public speeches made in the House of Delegates of Virginia, in the winter of 1824-5 that dissention existed in the college in consequence of an attempt of a professor to exact the fees of a full course when he had only

officiated for the half of the term, or had received his appointment so late that he could do no more : that the students resisted this exaction, and in the course of the controversy they were represented to have been contumacious, and were required to make the *amende honorable* to the professor whom their language had offended, on pain of expulsion from the college : they preferred the alternative rather than disgrace themselves ; and that as a wholesome exercise of discipline, *twenty-nine* young men were dismissed from the institution ! We learn further, that for three consecutive years, the president had never called the trustees or visitors together ; and that the entire management of the institution was left to the control of its professors, who were ever jarring ; or to the control of its highly censurable president, (Dr. Smith.) That from the year 1817, when his administration was but three years old, the college began to decline : and that so rapid was the declension, that its numbers were reduced in the last seven years of his presidency from 95 to 33.

The causes of the defection of the pupils, and the diminution of their number, appear to have been well understood by the inhabitants of Williamsburgh, and they were fully developed in the public speeches of members of the House of Delegates ; but the president had the tact to perceive, that if he could create a new excitement on a new subject, the real causes of the *consumption* under which the college labored might be overlooked in comparison of the specious ones which he could present ; and he with his friends petitioned the Legislature to remove the college to a more favorable part of the country, alleging as reasons therefor, the unhealthfulness of the present site : the location of other schools in its neighborhood, which diminished the wonted supply of pupils, &c. &c. But to all this the remonstrants answered that the decrease in the number of pupils was justly chargeable to its maladministration, and they showed to the satisfaction of the Legislature, as the event proved, that it was so. In this controversy, or rather trial of Dr. Smith, for such it in fact was, he was allowed to be heard at the bar of the house, and he gave his reasons for the removal of the college, but all would not avail ;* the Virginia legislature decided

* Dr. Smith seems to be particularly fond of exhibiting himself before public bodies, a failing, by the way, which is the natural result of his indomitable vanity. He believes that nothing in which he is interested can be well done, unless he does it. He was an assistant alderman of the 3d Ward of this city, some years ago, and on a certain occasion he attempted to inflict some punishment on his associates at a meeting of the corporation, in the shape of a studied speech, which they, very incourteously no doubt, refused to hear ; when he became very indignant, and charged them with a want of taste or lack of judgment, by way of retaliation for the insult. On a late occasion he applied to be heard before the board of Regents, and the privilege was accorded : when he took occasion to say all "manner of evil

against the petition, and the college remains where it has been since the year 1693, all Dr. Smith's reasons to the contrary notwithstanding, viz : swamps, bad climate, unhealthfulness, and rival colleges in the neighborhood ! The simple truth was, that the petition for its removal was one of the expedients to avoid the odium which was due, and did attach to its administration, and the public knew it. I regret that I cannot transcribe more extracts from the speeches of Mr. Tyler and Mr. Jones, who took the side of the remonstrants against the petition for removal, but it is sufficient for my present purpose to remark that the facts and arguments which they urged were deemed conclusive, Mr. Jones said, "It is known that the President of William and Mary denies the right of instruction, and has denounced liberty and equality as a dream. And it is said, reported and believed, that this same President is a Deist. Whether the fact be so or not, I know not, and I care not, but of this I am satisfied, that the report, whether true or false, has served materially to depress the college." The charges thus publicly reported remain still uncontradicted. Mr. Tyler, in his speech says, "Can any man doubt but that much of the decline is owing to the cruel, I was going to say tyrannical system of what is called discipline, exerted over the young men ?" The cause of the trouble was *exaction of fees* !! and the cause of almost all trouble in colleges is of a kindred character.* It was this which first attracted the attention of

things," in his own peculiar way, and to depreciate the character and acquirements of an absent man, whose only offence was that he would not consent to be indebted to his influence for the station he had occupied as a lecturer in the college. So unusual was such an exhibition before that board, and withal so disgusting to some of the members, that there is little danger of his having an opportunity to repeat it.

* The course of Physiology in all medical colleges in this country is connected with Anatomy, and it is very proper that it should be ; the demonstration of the structures of the human body belong to the one, and their uses or functions to the other ; he, therefore, who is an incompetent anatomist cannot be a well qualified physiologist. When Dr. Smith was removed from the chair of anatomy, and Dr. Rhinelandt appointed in his place, as no cause then existed for the exercise of severity, but rather regret for its necessity ; a new chair was made as a kind of cushion to break his fall, and the ticket for the course fixed at \$14. He lectures, if lecturing it may be called, twice a week, and is perfectly satisfied to receive the fee, without caring whether the student has value for it or not. Amusement seems to be the object, and in good sooth, if such a professorship was necessary for the recreation of the pupils, there are perhaps few men in our profession who would be better qualified, if he would generalize less, and look more attentively to the accuracy of his facts. As the case now stands his fee has the character of an *exaction*, and is much too high, since a larger amount of information, and much more satisfaction, may be had at Peale's museum every evening during the winter, at a much less price. It is a misfortune that his course is sub-graduate, for every student, before he presents himself for examination, must, if educated in this college, pay for this ticket twice, which by some is justly considered a great hardship.

the public to the administration of the College of Physicians and Surgeons, in 1819, and it is this which now in some degree accounts for the depression of it. Nothing is so well calculated to mar the interests of a college, as the exaction of fees of instruction where no instruction is communicated ; and nothing more is required to render an institution popular, than *just dealing* with the pupils ; it is all they ask ; but as regards the branch which the president teaches, like that which he has heretofore taught, they have asked in vain till now, and whether even now they shall have relief by a consolidation of the course of Physiology with Anatomy depends more upon themselves, than the interested influence of him who receives the fee. But to return to William and Mary. In a single sentence I will add that in despite of the operation of the causes which were urged for its removal, it is now in a more flourishing condition than it ever was before, and that its number of students is more than double that which it boasted in the most palmy days of its late president. The continued increment of the number since his departure, is an interesting comment on his former administration, which I trust will not fail of its influence on the Hon. Regents.

GRAVIOIRA MANENT.

No. 5.

In my last, I took occasion to look into the history of William and Mary College, in order to show the benefits of an AUTOCRATIC administration ; and as the same causes may be expected to be attended with the same results, I hope that the lesson will not be lost. It is one of the axioms of natural philosophy, that "more causes should not be adduced in explanation of a phenomenon, than being true, are sufficient to explain it." However true this may be in physics, it is far otherwise in morals, politics, and medical polemics ; there is generally so much room for evasion, and so many incidents upon which to hang feigned issues, that a small measure of ingenuity, without a due proportion of moral, will contrive to impose upon the common sense of well intentioned men, and make the worse appear the better reason. This was emphatically true in the case of William and Mary, and any other reason, but the true one, was assigned for its sickly condition, when under the treatment of Dr. John Augustine Smith. The same management may be expected to be resorted to, in order to explain the condition of the College of Physicians and Surgeons ; we may expect to hear that it has not the cordial support of the medical profession ; and this is true ; but the why ? will be omitted in the expla-

nation. We shall hear nothing through the Board of Trustees of deficient courses of instruction ; nothing of the course of Physiology, as being the standing jest of every medical man who has heard the lectures, whether pupil or professor ; nothing of the arrogance, vanity, and egotism of the lecturer, who is always more intent on making a display of *himself*, than of his subject ; but in place of these : intelligence, zeal, ability, industry, and devotion to the cause of medical instruction, will be in the gross, accorded to the professors, and will be written, as usual, by the President himself. Is it any wonder, that under management like this, the college does not flourish ? Is it not more a wonder that it exists at all ? The Presidents of colleges, for the most part, are selected for their moral and intellectual acquirement ; they are presumed to be good as well as great, and their characters being such, the institutions over which they preside, borrow, so to say, a revenue of reputation from their personal merits ; but it is far otherwise when the president of a college derives all the reputation he owns from the station he occupies ; and when this borrowing has continued for ten years, without any ability to cancel or diminish the debt as in the present instance, surely the apprehension is not unreasonable that both the debtor and creditor will be declared bankrupt ! An artificial reputation, like copper-washed coin, although it may pass current for a season, will finally discover its own counterfeit ; detection is never difficult ; it is a spontaneous process, which cannot be arrested while it is allowed to circulate ; and soon as discovered, it is of less value, even as base metal, than if never used for purposes of fraud. It is to prevent the inevitable result of detected deceit, that I write these papers : no man will do more to support the College of Physicians and Surgeons than Graviera manent, but he knows that all exertion is vain, so long as base metal passes for sterling silver ; the *incorruptible* moral, the *well educated* mind, the *kind and conciliating* conduct, which, if it could not command respect can solicit it, are all *minus qualities* in the character of the present incumbent. He is remarkable only for management, and this is a quality more calculated to disgust than to attract students. Those who are associated with him as professors know and feel that he is an incumbrance to the institution, and the very man who presented to the board of trustees that extraordinary resolution, "*that any consolidation of the courses of instruction was inexpedient*," was among the first, years ago, to declare it. I am sorry for the necessity imposed of speaking thus plainly, but it is truth, and the Hon. Regents ought to know it. If Dr. Smith or any of his apologists are offended by the exhibition, let them show it to be deceptive. My solemn conviction is, that nothing less than his retreat from the college will be followed by any beneficial consequence. In truth it needs

but little to make it one of the most efficient and the most respectable institutions in the country. An opinion has gone abroad that medical men are querulous—that they are always differing ; and to such an extent has this opinion affected the community, that Regents themselves have thought that they could not control their own schools of instruction ; and what has been the consequence ? Why, they have been controlled by one man, (which is certainly true in the instance of which we speak, and likely to be true of every other if the same opinion prevails,) who by a little cunning simply convenes his trustees to register his will. Hitherto I have spoken only of his capacity as a teacher, and the opinions I have given will be endorsed by every one connected with the college who is capable of balancing evidence ; and I invite him to try the question by demanding a scrutiny : he has only to ask for it, and he will be accommodated. In my next, I will examine his conduct as President in its moral aspect.

It is not a matter of indifference in a school composed of young men just entering on the busy scenes of life, and who are not by necessity subjected to any moral discipline, whether the examples set them by their teachers are worthy of their imitation or not ; the conduct of those whom as teachers they ought to respect, will by necessity measurably control their own ; and, indeed, oftentimes without their consciousness of its influence. Stern integrity, therefore, candor, liberality and ingenuousness, should always mark the character of a public teacher ; duty to the pupil ought never to be sacrificed to the gratification of personal vanity ; and least of all should the station which the professor occupies be prostituted to the base purpose of personal scandal.

GRAVIORA MANENT.

No. 6.

As this institution is at the present session of the Legislature petitioning for pecuniary relief, it is a point worthy of some consideration whether relief of any kind can be of any service so long as it is conducted on its present plan. The rules for its government are sufficiently explicit, and as unexceptionable, perhaps, as those of most medical colleges : but the misfortune is that they are rendered nugatory by the contrivance of its president, and unless some wholesome restraint be laid upon its administration, no legislative aid can serve any other purpose than to perpetuate its abuses. We have seen how the board of trustees is constituted ; we have seen how that board may, in fact, be packed to serve the purposes of the president, without the most distant apprehension of the appointing power (the Regents,) that they are

so used ; we do know that the president has long been in the habit of privately suggesting *proper persons* ! to fill its vacancies ; and that so successful has been this management, that upon a question which he was particularly interested to carry, his estimated majority included the names of persons suggested by himself, some of whom had *not been*, but *were expected to be appointed* ! !* And with facts like these standing out in bold relief, has the public any right to expect a just, equitable, and intelligent administration of its concerns ? I do not now speak of its financial management ; that will be taken care of, probably, under any circumstances, but of those highly responsible and interesting duties to which all others are subsidiary. The selection of teachers, the recommendation of professors, the supervision of the courses of instruction, are matters too important to be left to the direction of one man, and that man known to be incompetent to fulfil his own engagements to the public as a professor. Are the public prepared to accord to him the right of appointing lecturers, and, in truth, professors also, and of dismissing them when he pleases ? There are some disgraceful facts of this character, justly chargeable to Dr. Smith, which the profession ought to know before they place the college in the condition of a private school.

In the year 1837, Dr. Amariah Brigham, of Hartford, a gentleman of talent, moral, and professional acquirement, which will compare very favorably with those of Dr. Smith himself, was invited by the trustees to take the place of Lecturer on anatomy, the place from which he (Smith) was ejected, when he was superseded by Dr. Rhinelander : he accepted the appointment and lectured one term, at the end of which *he resigned* ! In the year 1837 Dr. Alban G. Smith *was appointed by the Regents* the professor of Surgery ; he had held a similar chair in the medical college of Cincinnati ; he accepted, and moved to this city, and lectured only two terms, at the end of which *he resigned* ! And Dr. John Augustine Smith knows that these resignations, although unexpected, were voluntary. We would be glad to be informed, however, of the agency through which these resignations were effected ; we should be pleased to know whether the trustees, in the one case, or the regents of the University in the other, were ever informed of either till asked to act upon the appointment of their successors ; and we would be pleased to be corrected, if we are wrong in our information,

* Graviora manent has in his possession a curiosity of this kind, in Dr. Smith's own hand writing : it is a statement of the names and number of the trustees, in separate columns, under the heads of *aye* and *no* ; this paper contains the names of two persons, neither of whom were trustees at the time the calculation was made, and one of whom has not yet been appointed a trustee. It is written in pencil mark, and therefore cannot be transferred.

that *he was agent himself*. If he had an auxiliary in this unrighteous persecution, and I am told that he had, will he break silence and give the public the name of his associate. In 1839, the trustees of the college, without any solicitation, appointed Dr. Manley of this city, lecturer on Obstetrics, in the place of Dr. Delafield, resigned; he lectured one term, and at the end of it he *did not resign*. The agency of Dr. Smith, and his associate, would have been of no use, it therefore was not volunteered; but a systematic plan of operation was devised by him, and carried out through the agency of some of his party, in the board of trustees, which, when opened up and fully understood, *will astonish by its baseness*. Here we have three incidents in close sequence, in which Dr. John Augustine Smith's management is apparent as the noon day; and when it is considered that he has by common consent been for years considered the dead weight which the college has been obliged to sustain, the history of them almost assumes the character of fable.

It may be stated, without fear of successful contradiction, that no man who was ever honored with the title of Professor in any college ever succeeded better in converting a lecture room for instruction into a theatre of mere amusement for the idle student; the by-play and digressive anecdote, which occupy four-fifths of the time, are permitted to absorb all the interest which ought to attach to the importance of Physiology; and the student if he receive value of any kind for his money, receives it in any thing but instruction. The pupils are induced, when the stories are twice told, to laugh by courtesy, for in that indeed they may claim to rival their Professor, who always sets the example; but except as a recreation from severe study, the course of lectures, as conducted, is utterly useless, if not injurious.*

Graviora manent cannot remove Dr. Smith from the place he occupies, but he intends to leave those without apology, who have the power to do it, and will not exercise it. A professor without talent, and a president whose conduct displays, to say the least, a very equivocal measure of morals, can hardly be the man to reflect character on the medical profession, or credit on the institution.

GRAVIORA MANENT.

* If John Augustine Smith's chair was an honorary one, or if the student who wished to graduate was not obliged to purchase the ticket, there would be much less dissatisfaction in the school; the attendance would then be voluntary, in place of being, as now, constrained; those would join his class who could well afford it, and if they were not instructed in physiology, they might occasionally be amused by his metaphysics. In such a condition of the chair, the revenue to be derived from it would be a revenue of reputation only; and although that might be small, it would not materially affect the interests of the college, if he was satisfied with its amount.

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